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ABSTRACT

A sample of 371 graduate students in 5 departments at the University of California at Berkeley was interviewed regarding their professional, academic, and political orientations. Their attitudes on academic work and institutions and political and academic issues were compared on the basis of their identification with the role of student, as opposed to scholar, roles and membership in the union of employed graduate students at Berkeley. It was found that student identification and union membership were associated with coherent political radicalism and that a substantial proportion of the whole sample rejected the traditionally narrow ends of professionalism and the norms that presently dominate the academic world. It was concluded that rejection of academic norms and values is increasing, but that radical graduate students and faculty should organize themselves within and across disciplines to deal successfully with their hostile professions and institutions. (Author)

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PROFESSIONAL ORIENTATIONS OF GRADUATE STUDENTS AND DETERMINANTS OF MEMBERSHIP IN THE GRADUATE STUDENTS UNION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

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SUMMARY

In recent years increasing numbers of graduate students have participated in and at times led student demonstrations on college and university campuses throughout the nation. Sometimes their participation has taken the form of individual involvement in general campus movements and organizations while at other times it has been through graduate organizations, increasingly graduate student trade unions. Because graduate student activism, both individually and as unionism, is in conflict with traditional academic values and dominant academic norms, such activism and related attitudes may be seen partly as a rejection of those norms and values. A sample of 371 graduate students in five departments at the University of California at Berkeley was interviewed regarding their professional, academic, and political orientations. Their attitudes on academic work and institutions and political and academic issues were compared on the basis of their identification with student, as opposed to scholar, roles and membership in the union of employed graduate students at Berkeley. It was found that student identification and union membership were associated with coherent political radicalism, and that a substantial proportion of the whole sample rejected the traditionally narrow ends of professionalism and the norms that presently dominate the academic world. It was concluded that rejection of academic norms and values is increasing. but that radical graduate students and faculty should organize themselves within and across disciplines to deal successfully with their hostile professions and institutions.

In recent years increasing numbers of graduate students have participated in and at times led student demonstrations on college and university campuses throughout the nation. Sometimes their participation has taken the form of individual involvement in general campus movements and organizations while at other times this involvement has been through graduate organizations, increasingly graduate student trade unions. Recently a union of 1000 teaching assistants at the University of Wisconsin struck over a variety of job related issues. But often, as at the University of California and San Francisco State College, such unions have participated in largely political strikes, even if they attach some job grievances of their own. At Columbia graduate students in large numbers participated in the occupation of buildings over political issues, though it was not through a union.

Such action by graduate students, whether organizationally as a union or individually through personal involvement, would seem to be inconsistent with the norms of academic professions for which graduate students prepare. After all, the traditional attitude among faculty members and their apprentices, the graduate students, has been that unions are unprofessional and degrading to their professions.[1] And dominant academic norms have stressed detachment and neutrality within academia, even if one were involved in a cause in his private life. But graduate students have been organizing and joining unions and "bringing the war home" together with other students who have been concerned over and involved in social and political issues of the past decade. Because graduate student activism, both individually and as unionism, is in conflict with traditional academic values and dominant academic norms, it is important to understand what significance this activism has for the roles graduate students play in the university, both now and in their future roles as faculty.

The Graduate Student and His Department

Joining in campus-wide actions or organizations devoted to extra-professional issues represents an identification with students' interests apart from the discipline, and this identification conflicts with the structural tendencies of graduate education. Unlike undergraduates, graduate students spend nearly all their nonleisure time in or around their own major department. They spend their time in classes, in research, in academic employment, and in a general "steeping" process, which consists of absorbing the perspective, the knowledge, the values, the language, the attitudes--in short, the culture--of their respective fields. It is total immersion in the discipline that represents the archetype of a "professional" orientation, a commitment to the work of the profession above all other commitments.[2] This immersion in the discipline structures the graduate student's role in the university around his own department. The student's involvement in his department is deep, and the identity that goes with it is very strong.

The case of the University of California is instructive. There have been few campus-wide graduate student organizations at Berkeley in recent years, and, like graduate student participation in general campus political activities, these organizations have waxed and waned in relatively short periods of time. The pattern of participation has been crisis- or issue-oriented. The issues would unite graduate students in opposition to the centrifugal force of the department focus, but as a rule one may expect the departmental orientation to prevail.

An important exception to this rule has been the union of employed graduate students at Berkeley, AFT Local 1570. It was organized early in 1965 as the first graduate student trade union in the United States.[3] Moreover it has been involved in virtually every political issue on the Berkeley campus since its inception even though most of its energies over time have gone into job related issues, especially those of teaching assistants who make up the bulk of the Union's membership.

The very existence of the Union for the last five years and the impressive continuity of graduate student participation in campus politics in the last couple of years suggest that important changes are taking place in the professional discipline-centered orientations of graduate students. While individual participation suggests changes in the professional identities of some graduate students, unionism among them is more significant because it formally recognizes and institutionalizes these new orientations. The fact that graduate student trade unionism is a recent and increasingly widespread phenomenon in the U.S. is indicative of changing attitudes among graduate students as a group.

The Study

To test the hypothesis that unionism is part of a growing rejection of dominant academic values and norms by graduate students, a study was undertaken of a sample of graduate students at the University of California at Berkeley in the spring of 1968. A 20 percent random sample of all graduate students was selected from each of five academic departments--two humanities, two social science, and one natural science. These departments were chosen because they were all relatively high in the proportion of employed graduate students in the department who were members of Local 1570, thus assuring adequate representation of Union members among the respondents. Of the 371 students who were interviewed for the study 15 percent were at the time members of the Union, 13 percent had at one time been members but then were not, and 72 percent had never been members.

In addition to and distinct from Union membership another factor was considered important to understanding graduate student rejection of dominant professional orientations. If a professional orientation involves viewing one's professional colleagues as his reference group, then identifying with "subprofessional" or nonprofessional groups represents an "unprofessional" orientation. That is, for apprentice-like graduate students, whether Union members or not, to see themselves as "students" rather than as "scholars" or "scientists" is to deny that they are professionals. There is nothing "anti-professional" in such an identification unless it is an active rejection of traditional professionalism. Thus one may pejoratively see himself as "only a student," low on the academic hierarchy but working his way up.[4] On the other hand, one may positively identify with his fellow students as an interest group within the university, opposing the interests of faculty (i.e., the traditional scholars and scientists in the academy) to the extent that they conflict with the interests of students. It is the active identification with students that is of greater interest to us in understanding the rejection of traditional roles by graduate students. A self-deprecatory identity is not conducive to graduate student activism or trade unionism. Far from identifying positively with his current work, status, or work group[5]--in essence his class, the person who sees himself as "only a student" wants to rise out of his "class."[6]

To compare respondents on the basis of student identification, they were asked, "At the present time, do you consider yourself to be more of a scholar or scientist than a student?" Possible responses were "almost entirely a student," "more student than scholar or scientist," "about equally a student and scholar or scientist," "more scholar or scientist than student," and "almost entirely a scholar or scientist." On most questions with which this was cross-tabulated the first two categories of respondents--"entirely a student" and "more student"--answered questions very similarly: in this report they will be grouped together and referred to as "Students." The next three groups of respondents--"about equally a student and scholar or scientist" to "almost entirely a scholar or scientist"--answered most questions very similarly: they will be called "Scholars." Those who said they "don't know" fell somewhere between the Students and the Scholars on most questions, but because their numbers are few (32 in all) they will be dropped from the tables in this report.

The main difficulty with this measure is that it does not distinguish between those Students whose identification is self-deprecatory and those who positively see themselves as students. This deficiency is compensated to some extent by ad hoc speculation at appropriate places in this report as to which respondents identify positively with being students and which see themselves as "only students."

Students, Scholars and the Union

Since both Students and Union members are expected to reject academic norms and values, one might expect them to be substantially related. Surprisingly then, Table 1 shows that present Union members are no more likely to identify themselves as Students than those who have never been members of the Union. This finding is sustained when respondents are broken down by progress toward their doctorates--except for the most advanced group. As Table 2 makes clear, a greater proportion of Union members than nonmembers in the last stage of their doctoral work--those who have passed their oral exams--do consider themselves Students. Yet this group of respondents, who have successfully completed the major hurdles of a doctoral program, is in a better position than those in earlier stages to see themselves as full-fledged members of the academy. We can reasonably suggest that these Ph.D. candidates deliberately reject identification with professionals, choosing instead to see themselves as Students. Their Union membership is part of their identification with student interests. Thus Union members are more likely than nonmembers to identify positively with students when they call themselves "Students"--though this is clearest only for those in the later stages of their doctoral work.[7]

TABLE 1. UNION MEMBERSHIP AND STUDENT/SCHOLAR ORIENTATION

Student/Scholar Orientation	Union Membership: Present	Past	Never
Student	56%	29%	59%
Scholar	44	71	41
	100% (48)*	100% (42)	100% (240)

*Figures in parentheses are the numbers of cases on which percentages are based.

TABLE 2. UNION MEMBERSHIP AND STUDENT/SCHOLAR ORIENTATION FOR RESPONDENTS IN LAST STAGE OF DOCTORAL WORK

Student/Scholar Orientation	Union Membership: Present	Past	Never
Student	43%	16%	28%
Scholar	57	84	72
	100% (23)	100% (31)	100% (75)

Disaffection from Norms and Content of Professionalism

Graduate students whose interests and values differ from the dominant ones in their fields are unlikely candidates for professional rewards that go to those who like and/or obey the prescriptions of professional norms. Those who do not publish or do not publish the right kind of articles in the right places cannot expect to win prestigeous or high paying jobs or even get tenure. Dissent in the academy, either from established content or from procedural criteria for professional success, is usually dealt with by exclusion from the luminous heights and banishment to the distant shadow lands of academe.

Thus those respondents who, for example, plan to spend all or most of their time teaching will not find a very receptive environment (see Table 3). More than twice as many Students as Scholars plan to be college teachers. While many of these Students' plans are consistent with their identities, they conflict with academic standards for success. The 27 percent of the Scholars who are also opting for teaching careers are more broadly opposing professional norms since their present identities and future plans conflict, according to standards of "professionalism."

TABLE 3. PLANS FOR ACADEMIC CAREER AND STUDENT/SCHOLAR ORIENTATION

Student/Scholar Orientation	Plans for Academic Career: All or mostly teach	Teach & research equally	All or mostly research	
Student	59%	34	7	100% (164)
Scholar	27%	52	21	100% (142)

As with research, anyone who scorns professional journals is an unlikely candidate for professional success. The academic journal may be seen as the touchstone for professional status in higher education. The stilted writing style and narrow content of most journal articles is a commonplace even in the professions that foster them. Avid reading of such journals, then, represents a real commitment to the discipline. In Table 4 it is clear that twice as many Scholars as Students say they read the main journal in their fields from cover to cover or at least a few articles in most issues ("read most issues" category in the table). Students are less interested in and less committed to the issues and work that dominate disciplines today.

TABLE 4. READING MAIN JOURNAL IN FIELD AND STUDENT/SCHOLAR ORIENTATION

Student/Scholar Orientation	Reading Journals: Read most issues	Glance thru, read occasionally	Seldom or never see journals	
Student	22%	34	45	100% (179)
Scholar	49%	36	15	100% (150)

Table 5 suggests that Union members who see themselves as Students are far less interested in the content of journals than are those Students who are not members of the Union, but half those who see themselves as Scholars read journals thoroughly, regardless of Union membership. How can we explain this extreme disinterest in the main journal of their fields for Student-Union members? One could argue that graduate students who are in programs preparing for professional work but who do not care enough about current work that dominates their disciplines to read the discipline's journals must not be able students. That is, those who are not interested are probably incompetent. Such an argument is specious since it allows no other important content or method than that with which established journals deal. In fact in the last few years disenchanted graduate students and young faculty in many disciplines have organized new journals and newsletters in which they can publish and read material that seldom finds its way into journals controlled by professional associations. The implication that may be drawn from this finding is, then, that Union-Students choose to read things other than dominant academic journals because they reject the usual journal content and not because they are incompetent.

TABLE 5. PERCENT WHO READ MOST ISSUES OF MAIN JOURNAL IN FIELD BY UNION MEMBERSHIP AND STUDENT/SCHOLAR ORIENTATION

Student/Scholar Orientation	Union Membership: Present	Past	Never
Student	7% (27)*	42% (12)	23% (139)
Scholar	48% (21)	40% (30)	53% (99)

*Figures in parentheses are the numbers of cases on which percentages are based.

Although this study did not ask about other material the respondents read and although it had no way of measuring the actual ability of graduate students (by whatever criteria), it did measure the respondents' own confidence in their professional abilities. Table 6 shows the proportions of respondents who answered "Definitely yes" to the question, "Do you now feel confident that you could creditably undertake an independent program of research or scholarship?" On the basis of the substantially greater confidence in research ability on the part of Scholars one could conclude that Students are less secure about their abilities and, because of their insecurity, identify with being a student. But a much higher proportion of Union members who are Students are definitely confident of their research abilities than are those Students who have never been members. This is the

same group that had the lowest proportion of respondents who read academic journals thoroughly. Clearly, for Union-Students one cannot argue that they reject Scholar status because of professional insecurity. Rather they see their student status as having intellectual and political meaning for their roles in the university and their professions. And similarly the argument against unions occasionally advanced in academia, that their members feel the need to bargain collectively because they are insecure professionally, is disputed by the data.

TABLE 6. PERCENT DEFINITELY CONFIDENT IN RESEARCH ABILITY BY UNION MEMBERSHIP AND STUDENT/SCHOLAR ORIENTATION

Student/Scholar Orientation	Union Membership: Present	Past	Never
Student	41% (27)	42% (12)	24% (141)
Scholar	76% (21)	67% (30)	57% (99)

Rejection of Established Norms and Content

The measures we have been dealing with up to now have been the personal manifestations of what we have assumed is ideological opposition to dominant professional concerns and norms. We have seen that the lack of interest and commitment of Students and Union members to currently dominant work in their disciplines is not generally based on the respondents' feelings of inadequacy to the tasks of their disciplines. Yet for some disinterest may be a passive alienation from their fields, and for others it may involve active rejection which includes pursuing alternatives which make their disciplines relevant to their social and political concerns. An outgrowth of the latter group has been the development of radical caucuses and study groups within and among the disciplines--i.e., the Union of Radical Political Economists, the radical caucus of the Modern Language Association, a Marxist philosophers organization, and so on. These organizations support their members in their attempts to use the knowledge and methods of their disciplines for radical political ends, uses that find a hostile reception in the academic establishment.

But how do we know that the responses of Students and Union members in this study are not indicators of personal alienation unembellished by coherent opinions that relate politics to academic work and institutions? In a series of questions that related to the professions, the University, and politics Student-Union members distinguished themselves from other groups by their clearcut rejection of dominant professional and faculty norms. Being a Student or being a Union members is indicative of some degree of disaffection from the standards by which most graduate students are judged and most departments are administered.

The low esteem in which many doctoral students hold the degree for which they are working is demonstrated in Table 7. The group with the highest percentage of respondents who dismiss the Ph.D. are Student-Union members, and the group with the smallest proportion are the Scholars who have never joined the Union. Both Union membership and Student identification are associated with disparagement of the degree.

TABLE 7. PERCENT AGREE THAT "DOCTORATE IS MAINLY A UNION CARD" BY UNION MEMBERSHIP AND STUDENT/SCHOLAR ORIENTATION

Student/Scholar Orientation	Union Membership: Present	Past	Never
Student	59% (27)	50% (12)	42% (140)
Scholar	45% (21)	43% (30)	34% (99)

Likewise more than three quarters of the Student-Union members agreed with the statement, "Some of the best students drop out because they do not want to 'play the game' or 'beat the sustem'" (Table 8). This question is an indication of the cynicism with which many graduate students view their degree programs. Surprisingly 41 percent of the Scholars who have never been members of the Union agreed with the statement, while Scholar-Union members and Student nonmembers fell between the highest and lowest groups. Such cynicism suggests a considerable degree of subjective alienation of many graduate students from the work they are doing.

TABLE 8. PERCENT AGREE THAT "BEST STUDENTS SOMETIMES DROP OUT" BY UNION MEMBERSHIP AND STUDENT/SCHOLAR ORIENTATION

Student/Scholar Orientation	Union Membership: Present	Past	Never
Student	78% (27)	67% (12)	54% (140)
Scholar	65% (20)	40% (30)	41% (99)

In addition to devaluing their academic programs, many respondents rejected the authority of the senior faculty who are primarily responsible for running the programs, administering the departments, and teaching graduate courses. Half the Union members, regardless of student/scholar orientation, agreed with the statement, "It is usually the case that the faculty members who have the most important things to say to students are the 'junior faculty'--assistant professors and the like" (Table 9). A third of those who have never been in the Union agreed (and student/scholar orientation seems to have had little to do with opinions on this statement). Similar responses were obtained to other related questions.

TABLE 9. PERCENT AGREED THAT "JUNIOR FACULTY HAVE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS TO SAY" BY UNION MEMBERSHIP AND STUDENT/SCHOLAR ORIENTATION

Student/Scholar Orientation	Union Membership: Present	Past	Never
Student	44% (27)	17% (12)	36% (141)
Scholar	60% (20)	40% (30)	30% (99)

The responses of Union members and Students to the last three questions, representing their cynicism toward their own programs and the degrees they are seeking and their relatively depreciatory attitude toward senior faculty, suggest that a "crisis of confidence" in the academic establishment is at hand. Indeed the recent disruptions of professional society conventions and the organizing of radical caucuses would indicate that this rejection of policies and interests of the dominant academic groups is intense and widespread among graduate students.

The focus for the strongest dissent today is the content of many disciplines. Particularly in the social sciences, but in the humanities and natural sciences too, radical critics point to the assumptions and theories, the methods and their consequences of the most prestigeous and best rewarded members of their fields as supporting political stability and opposing dissent from and attempts to alter the political and economic structures of society. Dissent over the content of the disciplines has led radical academic groups to begin publications of their own and to disseminate their work as widely as possible, both within and outside their disciplines.[8]

The Students and Union members in this study showed similar disaffection from the content of their fields. Half of the entire sample reported they were dissatisfied with the "social relevance of problems that now concern people in your field" (Table 10). More than 80 percent of the Student-Union members said they were dissatisfied, compared to only a third of the Scholars who were never Union members. Both Union membership and Student identification were associated with dissatisfaction. It is clear that Student identification and Union membership are both part of an orientation that rejects the dominant concerns and norms of academe.

TABLE 10. PERCENT DISSATISFIED WITH RELEVANCE OF THEIR FIELDS BY UNION MEMBERSHIP AND STUDENT/SCHOLAR ORIENTATION

Student/Scholar Orientation	Union Membership: Present	Past	Never
Student	83% (24)	64% (11)	49% (132)
Scholar	60% (20)	41% (29)	35% (95)

Among the norms they reject is the liberal notion that the University should remain strictly neutral with respect to political and social issues. "Scientific neutrality" is the compromise that scholars and scientists made long ago with those who control the institutions of higher education; this compromise has allowed them to exercise a degree of control over entry into their fields and colleges and evaluation of professional practitioners. It has also brought them considerable financial rewards in government contracts and grants in the past few decades. However, many radicals and left-liberals in and out of the academy agree with Professor Allan Silver of Columbia who wrote, "To treat the nation-state 'as if' it were only another'outside agency,' from whose purposes the universities may remain institutionally neutral, is indeed naive when so much university work is dependent on--if not actually sponsored by--the state, and when men have come to disagree about the state's purposes and means as passionately as they once did about God's."[9]

The respondents in this study were surprisingly united on this issue. Nearly 90 percent of the Student-Union members agreed that "The University, and the learning and knowledge produced in it, should be an instrument of radical social change in America" (Table 11). And following close behind were Union-Scholars and all Students. Two-thirds of all respondents agreed with this opposition to the stated norms of academic work and institutions.

TABLE 11. PERCENT AGREE THAT "UNIVERSITY SHOULD BE INSTRUMENT OF RADICAL CHANGE" BY UNION MEMBERSHIP AND STUDENT/SCHOLAR ORIENTATION

Student/Scholar Orientation	Union Membership: Present	Past	Never
Student	89% (27)	73% (11)	69% (140)
Scholar	81% (21)	63% (30)	54% (98)

At the time of this survey the issue of classified research was just being raised by the student movement in its attack on university complicity with the military. It had not been resolved by faculty agreement on many campuses to ban secret work. In fact classified government research was supported by many faculty with references to the undermining of academic freedom and neutrality, were some kinds of research prohibited. As with the question of neutrality, more than 90 percent of the Union-Students agreed that "The University should not allow classified (i.e., secret) research to be done in any of its facilities" (Table 12). Less than half the non-Union Scholars agreed; other combinations of unionism and Student identity were associated with greater support for this statement.

TABLE 12. PERCENT AGREE THAT "UNIVERSITY SHOULD NOT ALLOW CLASSIFIED RESEARCH" BY UNION MEMBERSHIP AND STUDENT/SCHOLAR ORIENTATION

Student/Scholar Orientation	Union Membership: Present	Past	Never
Student	93% (27)	67% (12)	59% (140)
Scholar	67% (21)	53% (30)	41% (99)

Politics, Students, and Union Members

The coherent politics of Students and Union members with respect to academic norms and values are, as one would expect, related to their political views on issues in the larger society. The two issues of the past decade that have evoked the most involvement and polarization in this country are the struggle of black people for equality and justice and the war in Vietnam. It comes as no surprise to find a higher proportion of Student-Union members taking left political positions and acting on them than any other grouping of respondents. As with academic orientations and opinions, Union membership and Student identification generally are associated with more radical politics than nonmembership and identification as a Scholar.

Although the war in Vietnam has been unpopular among nearly all segments of the academy, a much greater proportion of Union-Scholars are strongly opposed to the war than non-Union Scholars (see Table 13). More than 80 percent of the Students who are past and present Union members agreed that "The U.S. should immediately withdraw its forces from South Vietnam," not a very popular demand even among the broad base of war opponents in the spring of 1968. The role of Union in involving graduate students in political activity, especially against the war, is demonstrated in Table 14. Over half the Student-Union members and a third of the Scholar-Union members actually participated in the "Stop the Draft Week" demonstrations at the Oakland Armed Forces Induction Center in October, 1967.

TABLE 13. PERCENT AGREE THAT "U.S. SHOULD IMMEDIATELY WITHDRAW FROM VIETNAM" BY UNION MEMBERSHIP AND STUDENT/SCHOLAR ORIENTATION

Student/Scholar Orientation	Union Membership: Present	Past	Never
Student	82% (27)	83% (12)	67% (141)
Scholar	76% (21)	63% (30)	59% (98)

TABLE 14. PERCENT ACTIVELY SUPPORTED STOP THE DRAFT WEEK BY UNION MEMBERSHIP AND STUDENT/SCHOLAR ORIENTATION

Student/Scholar Orientation	Union Membership: Present	Past	Never
Student	56% (25)	27% (11)	12% (139)
Scholar	33% (21)	10% (29)	12% (98)

As with the war in Vietnam, Union membership and Student identification are associated with greater support for "Black Power" than nonmembers, especially nonmember Scholars (see Table 15). More than two-thirds of all Union members disagreed with the statement that "The tactics of the current 'Black Power' movement are probably going to hurt efforts directed toward securing the rights of Negro Americans more than they will help." Still, half the most conservative group--the non-Union Scholars--also rejected the statement.

TABLE 15. PERCENT DISAGREED THAT "BLACK POWER MOVEMENT WILL HURT CAUSE OF NEGROES" BY UNION MEMBERSHIP AND STUDENT/SCHOLAR ORIENTATION

Student/Scholar Orientation	Union Membership: Present	Past	Never
Student	67% (27)	67% (12)	54% (140)
Scholar	76% (21)	53% (30)	49% (99)

Because Students who were Union members at the time of the survey were usually the most radical group of respondents on academic and political issues, one would expect them to be the most politically oriented Union members. For them, more than for others, the Union would be a vehicle for political activity as well as for improving working conditions.[10] Union members, past and present, were asked whether they personally were more interested in bread-and-butter issues, political issues, or equally interested in both (Table 16). More than 80 percent of the Students who were then members of the Union said they were more interested in politics or equally interested in both politics and job related issues, compared to 20 percent fewer Union-Scholars. Fewer than half the "past member" Scholars were at all interested in political issues--probably a major reason for their being ex-members given the amount of political involvement of the Union itself.

TABLE 16. PERCENT INTERESTED MORE IN POLITICAL ISSUES OR IN BOTH POLITICAL AND BREAD-AND-BUTTER ISSUES BY UNION MEMBERSHIP AND STUDENT/SCHOLAR ORIENTATION

Student/Scholar Orientation	Union Membership: Present	Past
Student	82% (27)	58% (12)
Scholar	62% (21)	43% (30)

The political commitment and activity of Union members is evident not only in their attitudes as demonstrated above. Union members tend to be politically active. Over half the Union members in the sample were members of a campus political organization as well, compared to only 16 percent of the respondents who had never joined the Union (Table 17). It is likely that Union members who are politically active do not see the Union as their primary political activity, but rather as a means of bringing their political views to bear on University matters.

TABLE 17. MEMBERSHIP IN CAMPUS POLITICAL ORGANIZATION BY UNION MEMBERSHIP

Membership in Campus Political Organization	Union Membership: Present	Past	Never
Member	59%	20%	16%
Not member	41	80	84
	100% (56)	100% (49)	100% (265)

Breadth of Support for Union

Those members of the Union who are politically committed may not constitute a very large percentage of the graduate students at the University, but that does not mean that they are isolated or do not represent the sentiments of a much larger proportion of graduate students. A third of the

respondents who had never been members of the Union said they "generally actively support Union-endorsed activities, such as demonstrations or strikes on campus" or issues in their departments (Table 18). That is substantial support for an organization that is academically and politically fairly radical, especially from the heirs to a well-heeled privileged professional group not noted within the University for its radicalism. This support is related to the roughly third of the non-Union Scholars, the most conservative group, who joined the larger proportions of Union members and Students in rejecting academic norms and concerns.

TABLE 18. ACTIVELY SUPPORT UNION ACTIONS BY UNION MEMBERSHIP

Support Actions	Union Membership: Present	Past	Never
Yes	83%	56%	32%
No	17	44	68
	100% (54)	100% (48)	100% (248)

Undoubtedly the Union gains support in part from the widespread distrust of students toward the campus administration. Two-thirds of all respondents disagreed with the statement, "The Berkeley campus administration can usually be counted upon to give sufficient consideration to the rights and needs of students in setting University policy" (Table 19). Many of the campus' troubles are seen to stem from the policies and methods of the administration with whom the Union is often in conflict. The same proportions of respondents believed that conflicts on the campus are "nearly inevitable" because of the "way the Berkeley campus is run," and 83 percent of the respondents who had never been Union members agreed with the statement that "The Union is needed to organize and represent the interests of graduate students on campus."

TABLE 19. PERCENT DISAGREE THAT "STUDENTS CAN COUNT ON CAMPUS ADMINISTRATION" BY UNION MEMBERSHIP AND STUDENT/SCHOLAR ORIENTATION

Student/Scholar Orientation	Union Membership: Present	Past	Never
Student	89% (27)	67% (12)	60% (140)
Scholar	76% (21)	63% (30)	61% (98)

And from the Union's most important constituency--employed graduate students--support is strongest among teaching assistants. More than 50 percent of those whose jobs are to teach are or have been members of the Union, compared to a little less than a third of the researchers (Table 20). Yet even among those who have never joined the Union 34 percent of the teaching assistants and 15 percent of the research assistants said they actively support Union actions on campus or in their departments.

TABLE 20. CAMPUS JOB BY UNION MEMBERSHIP

		Union Membership			
		Present	Past	Never	
Job	Teaching	40%	16	44	100% (107)
	Research	10%	21	69	100% (39)

This greater support from TAs at the time of the survey is to be expected given the contrast between the characteristics of research assistantships and teaching assistantships. Research assistants tend to work alone and in isolation from other RAs more than teaching assistants do. RAs work more closely with a faculty member than TAs whose closest working relations are often with other TAs and their own students.

While it is likely that departments that are hostile to the Union can weaken it by creating more research assistantships and reducing the number of teaching assistantships, it is unlikely that graduate student activism on the whole would be much affected.[11] The rejection of professionalism by a large proportion of graduate students suggests that activism among them is not "caused" by their membership in unions. Rather it is due to their perceptions of their fields and professionas as having little relation to the problems and issues they think are important, the things that probably led them to the field in the first place--little relation, that is, except perhaps as part of an oppressively organized society.

Conclusions

From the data of the study presented in this paper four fairly distinctive groupings emerge. Those I have called Scholars who have never been members of the Union are the ones most committed to the norms and values of professionalism as it is generally regarded in the contemporary academic world. As a group they believe more than the other groups in the authority of the dominant faculty, the worth of their doctoral programs, the norms of the academy, and the concerns that dominate their fields.

Students who have never joined the Union appear to be more alienated as a group than the non-Union Scholars, going through the motions of their programs with less involvement and commitment. Fewer of them believe in the value of their programs or the wisdom of the senior faculty, but political radicalism does not seem to constitute as great an influence on their professional orientation as the two remaining groups. Thus their lack of commitment may be seen more as passive alienation from the profession than active rejection of its norms and values.

The Scholars who are present members of the Union appear as a group to be committed to professionalism in many ways--for example, they read journals more thoroughly than non-Union Students--but only in so far as professionalism can relate to their political and social concerns. Thus a relatively high proportion of them are dissatisfied with the social relevance of their fields, and they are politically radical and active compared to non-Union Scholars. They debunk their graduate programs and the faculty who dominate them because their programs, like their disciplines, do not speak to their concerns.

The Students who are present members of the Union are the most radical group, politically and in their rejection of the norms and concerns of academic professionalism. They tend not to believe in the value of their programs, the authority or wisdom of the faculty who govern their departments, the norms of neutrality that academicians consider sacrosanct, or the concerns and interests that dominate their fields. They evidence the lowest commitment to professional symbols and work of any of the groups. Their disinterest in the concerns of the professions is, unlike the non-Union Students, clearly rejection and not a passive result of alienation. They probably see professional roles as valuable to political and social ends without being convinced of the worth of professional work itself. This is what distinguishes them from Union-Scholars who do appear to believe in the value of the work they do as professionals.[12]

Although the Union-Students are more likely to reject professional norms and values than any other group, they are certainly not alone. They are joined in these attitudes toward faculty, their professions, their programs, their departments, and politics by a third of the most conservative group, the non-Union Scholars. It is worth noting, too, that these data are two years old. It is unlikely that graduate students have become more loyal members of the professions. All indications are to the contrary.

It is of considerable significance that graduate student activism, whether in the Union or outside it, conflicts with the immersion in discipline and department that is characteristic of the structure of graduate education. An increase in graduate student activism, in which they come together with each other and other students to act on perceived common interests, necessarily implies a decrease in professional loyalty and careerist aspirations. Commitment to social and political concerns conflicts with the narrower end of the advancement of the profession.

Graduate students who are committed to political, social and economic change will have a rough time "making it" as the next generation of faculty in our colleges and universities. We can expect that a substantial proportion of them will remain committed to extra-professional ends. They will continue to reject the norms and concerns of professionalism that conflict with those ends. Faced with a hostile academic establishment, both within their disciplines and within universities themselves, they will need radical caucuses and organizations in and across disciplines merely to survive. These groups may help to overcome isolation, they may be useful in clarifying and developing the usefulness of the discipline or profession to the ends they have in common, and they may even aid the victims of political firings in finding new jobs. The dissenting academy is growing and its potential base appears to be large. But its members do not hold the reins of power. Only through developing strong defensive organizations like unions and supportive organizations oriented to the disciplines and professions can academic radicals gain enough security to withstand the pressures of being dissidents in institutions that reward orthodoxy.

NOTES

1. See George Strauss, "The AAUP as a Professional Occupational Association," Industrial Relations, 1965, 5(1), 128-140, and M. Lieberman, "The Folklore of the Teaching Profession," Union Review, 1962, 1(1), 57-65.

2. Cf. Harold L. Wilensky, "The Professionalization of Everyone?" American Journal of Sociology, 1964, 70(2), 137-158.

3. For a brief early history of the Union see Sidney Ingerman, "Employed Graduate Students Organize at Berkeley," Industrial Relations, 1965, 5(1), 141-150.

4. This may be viewed as a "pre-professional" attitude. A graduate student is officially in limbo between a non-professional status of "student" and a fully professional role of "faculty." The point at which he sees himself as a "scholar" is thus an important landmark in his adopting a professional identity. On the vision of upward mobility of professionals and white collar workers see B. Goldstein, "Some Aspects of the Nature of Unionism Among Salaried Professionals in Industry," American Sociological Review, 1955, 20(2), 199-205, and Anonymous, "Why White Collar Workers Can't Be Organized," Harper's, August 1957, 44-50.

5. Regarding these and other correlates of union participation see P. M. Blau and W. R. Scott, Formal Organization: A Comparative Approach. San Francisco: Chandler, 1962, p. 48.

6. The "class" identification mentioned here refers to students, not the working class. Working class identification was not part of the analysis for this report because it would have contributed little to the hypothesis regarding identification with students as a factor in graduate student activism. Actually, working class consciousness is less prevalent among Union members than consciousness of student interests. Only 43 percent of the present Union members agreed that "Everyone who works, whether as a laborer or an academician, should belong to a union," whereas 97 percent agreed that "The Union is needed to organize and represent the interests of graduate students on campus." This finding should not be too surprising given that teaching assistants and research assistants are first graduate students and secondarily workers: their employee status is contingent on their student status.

7. Unfortunately the number of cases is too small to allow meaningful cross-tabulations of Union membership, student/scholar orientation, and progress toward the degree with other variables. Therefore, I have had to rely on cross-tabulations leaving out degree progress.

8. Radicals in the academic world have deliberately blurred and crossed discipline boundaries to work on problems and issues on the basis of common concerns and politics rather than considerations of discipline alone.

9. "Who Cares for Columbia?" New York Review, January 30, 1969, 23.

10. Cf. Frank A. Pinner's discussion of the National Union of Students of France (UNEF) in "Student Trade-Unionism in France, Belgium, and Holland: Anticipatory Socialization and Role-Seeking," Sociology of Education, 1964, 37(3), 177-199.

11. Assuming the unlikely prospect of undergraduates standing for a further reduction of the faculty-student ratio which this would entail, or more unlikely, the state providing money to hire more regular faculty at a time when higher education is coming under attack from the conservative forces that usually control state legislatures and governorships.

12. This suggests a limitation of Harold Wilensky's typology of professional orientations in "The Professionalization of Everyone?" Wilensky's typology includes categories for those who are committed to the ends of the profession, those whose primary commitment is to the personal benefits of their professional roles, and those who use their profession to further some extra-professional end. Even accepting the validity of these three types, Wilensky neglects the type suggested here, those who see their professional roles--as distinct from the work of the profession--as being useful in pursuing an extra-professional end.